CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 18 MAY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXTS OF A PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE DEFENCE COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET ON 13 MAY 1998 AND A STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF PAKISTAN TO THE SENATE OF PAKISTAN ON 13 MAY 1998

I have the honour to transmit to you the texts of a Press release issued by the Defence Committee of the Cabinet on 13 May, 1998 and a Statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan to the Senate of Pakistan on 13 May, 1998.

I shall be grateful if these texts are circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Munir Akram
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

GE.98-61522

PRESS RELEASE OF THE DEFENCE COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET OF 13 MAY, 1998.

The Defence Committee of the Cabinet met today under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to take stock of the situation arising from Indian nuclear tests and overt weaponisation by India.

The meeting concluded that the reckless and highly provocative actions by the Indian Government had fundamentally altered the strategic situation in South Asia, besides dealing a severe blow to global non-proliferation.

The Indian Government had in the recent weeks exhibited a pattern of irresponsible behaviour and taken deliberate steps to further heighten the tensions in the region.

These Indian actions have magnified manifold the immediacy and the magnitude of the threat to Pakistan's security.

The meeting regretted that Pakistan's warnings to the international community particularly major powers to stop India from crossing the threshold had gone unheeded.

On the other hand countries had sought to bring unjustifiable pressure and sanctions to bear on Pakistan, despite our impeccable record of utmost restraint.

The responsibility for demolishing the prospects of a Nuclear Free South Asia rested clearly with India and with those who had adopted a differential approach and sought to either ignore or acquiesce in India's blatant attempts to cross the nuclear threshold.

The meeting affirmed the government's determination to reject any unilateral, selective and discriminatory pressure from any quarter on matters pertaining to national security.

It reiterated Pakistan's resolve to take all steps it deemed necessary for national security, which were within its sovereign rights for self-defence.

After comprehensively evaluating the defence preparedness the meeting expressed satisfaction over Pakistan's ability to respond effectively and adequately to the new threats and challenges.

STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF PAKISTAN
TO THE SENATE OF 13 MAY 1998.

The news of the carrying out of two further nuclear tests today by India, corroborates our assessment and provides further confirmation, if any were needed, about India's consistent pattern of irresponsible behaviour.

The blind pursuit of intrinsic and inherent hegemonic impulses, reflected so often in Indian behaviour and ignored largely by the international community, despite Pakistan's repeated efforts to draw attention to them, has definitely encouraged and emboldened India to throw all caution to the winds.

The invoking of mandatory sanctions under US Laws against India hardly constitutes an effective response to Indian provocative actions or compensates for errors of judgement, which have seriously disrupted the regional strategic balance.

India is now admittedly testing the whole range of nuclear weaponry, including battlefield/tactical nuclear weapons which are Pakistan specific.

Indian actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Pakistan's security, will not go unanswered.

Pakistan once again reiterates that responsibility for consequences that will inevitable ensue would lie squarely with India and those who have colluded and acquiesced in the weaponisation of India's nuclear programme.